THE
NEW YORK LEDGER
DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS COMMERCE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 1872.

# BUYING A SEWING MACHINE.

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"Will you get me one, Will.? *Do.* You know I am *so* lonesome while you are absent. And a sewing machine not only will facilitate my work, but be really company for me. Please?"

The pretty little woman put her hand caressingly on her husband's shoulder, and looked so sweetly and pleadingly into his eyes, that he found it no longer possible to withhold the desired promise.

"Yes, yes, you shall have one, May. I—"

She interrupted him, by exclaiming:

"Oh! thank you, Will. When? To-day? This morning? I can scarcely wait to see it, now I know I am to have one. Whose make? Which do *you* think the best? Can I go to look at some?"

"Stop, do, and get your breath. You have asked about a dozen questions. What an impatient little body you are!" said William Lance.

The least bit of a pout, which was not disfiguring to the little mouth, made him sensible he had said something unpleasant, and William hastened to say:

"There—I did not mean, by saying you were impatient, that you were cross, irritable, peevish, or anything of that sort; nothing but the best construction you can put on the word. Now bring back your smiles and listen to me. You will have to restrain your *eagerness*—ah, that's the word—not objectionable, hey?" said William, catching hold of the little chin and kissing away the pout which came again. "I will talk with some of my friends, and get some points concerning the different makes. If I can, I will get Barden to look round with me. He knows all about machines. If I am satisfied on the subject, I will try and get you one up this afternoon. There, now, I guess you can wait that long.""

"O yes. You are so good and kind, and I'm *so* delighted!" said May, her face radiant with smiles.

"Oh, May, I want to caution you about one thing!" said William Lance, starting back, as he was about leaving the house. "Don't say anything about our intention of purchasing a machine to any one. If you *do*, we will be overrun, harassed to death, by these agents and their canvassers. They are so sharp; they know every house in town where there is not a machine, and can tell by a single look at a person's face whether he is *thinking* of getting one. There is Clover, who is almost every morning, as I pass, standing at his door. He will see what is on my mind now, sure; and I should not be a bit surprised if he sends one of his chaps either here or to my office, before twelve o'clock; and if he, or any one from his place, is seen entering, you may make up your mind to receiving calls from ten or a dozen others. Now don't be making any inquiries on the subject. I guess, to be on the safe side, you had better stay at home today."

"Very well; I'll do anything to please you. And I should be sure to peep into every window where I saw a sewing machine. But really, William, I think you exaggerating. Just the idea of such a thing!"

"Well, don't try to prove the truth of my words, please," said William, as he closed the door.

He had not been gone half an hour, when May's particular friend, Jennie Swift, came in, and said:

"Hurry on your walking suit, May, and come down town with me; I am going to get some machine needles."

"Indeed I cannot—particularly not into a sewing machine establishment," answered May.

"Why not? What do you mean?" asked Jennie, in surprised tones.

"Why—well, I will tell you: William is going to give me a machine to-day, perhaps. He is going to look about and see which he likes. He says he does not want to be harassed by canvassers. I must not let it be known I've any idea of purchasing one. You ought to hear how he talks about them. So I've promised to stay home to-day, lest I should not be able to resist looking at and inquiring about the merits of different machines," May said.

"Oh, that is it! Well, then I must go. But, dear me! what is the use of his looking around? He can never find any better than the 'Inquiry.' You know what beautiful work ours does. It is perfect in every way. Don't decide until you try the 'Inquiry.' Tell your husband I know as much about sewing machines as anybody, and he had better take my advice on the subject. Good-by, then; I'll come in again when Mr. Lance is home, and we will talk this over," Jennie said.

About noon May was thinking perhaps William might get an hour from the office, and see something about the machines, when the bell sounded, and very soon after the servant came in, saying:

"There's a gentleman wishes to see you. He has got a sewing machine in his wagon."

"Oh, I'm so glad. How soon Will. has sent it!" May exclaimed, going smiling to the door.

"I have a machine here, Madam," began the polite young man, making a graceful bow.

May interrupted whatever else he was about to say, with:

"O yes. It is all right. Bring it in; I am so anxious to see it. Mr. Lance ordered it, I suppose?"

"No, Madam, he has not ordered it yet, but we hope and expect he will allow me to bring it in. You contemplate purchasing some machine, I believe?" said the good looking, pleasant speaking young man.

May hesitated, scarce knowing how to send off such a very polite gentleman, and was really anxious to see the machine work. She demurred a little, but it ended of course in the machine being placed on trial in May's sitting-room. And after the young man had fully impressed on May's mind the great merit of his machine, he left, promising to call the next day and bring a young lady to give her instructions, if she wished, in operating on "The Inquiry." Scarcely had he left, when again the bell sounded, and again May was called to the door, this time to meet an elderly, grave looking old gentleman, who begged leave to be allowed to show her the "Spokes and Wilboy" machine.

She told him she knew nothing about machines. Her husband was going to decide upon one, and as he was not at home, she could not act in the matter.

"Of course not, Madam. Most certainly you are very right. But if you would allow me the privilege and great pleasure of showing you the beauties of our machine, I would be very grateful—"

"But I have the 'Inquiry' here now, on trial," said May.

"Ah! well, then surely you will allow an old man the same pleasure as you did the young one. If you will only give me a few moments, I will prove the advantages of 'The Spokes and Wilboy' over *any* and *all* other machines."

How could she be rude to such a venerable, dignified old man? So in he and his machine went; and after making the most of the best points of his machine, he took his departure.

May was standing between the two machines, turning her gaze from one to the other, when again she heard the bell, and the girl, putting her head in, said:

"Another machine, Madam."

When May approached the door, she found this time her permission to enter was not wanted, for the man was in the act of lifting the machine out of the wagon. A few moments more, and he was beside her, asking:

"Where will you have it, Madam?"

But ere she could answer, William came in, saying:

"You are not much ahead of me. We will take it in here."

Opening the door, and taking hold of one end of the machine table, he backed into the sitting-room, and up against the "Inquiry." Turning quickly, he asked:

"Why, what is this? How came it here?" looking reproachfully at May.

As she was about to answer, his eyes, in seeking a good position for the machine, fell on the other—the "Spokes and Wilboy."

Another look at May, more reproachful than the other, and turning to the man, he said:

"You ask the young lady to come at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon. I should like to be present when she gives instructions."

The man went out, and then William turned to May, saying:

"After all I said to you, to care so little for my caution. You promised me—"

"Oh, Will., indeed I've not been outside of the door. I believe what you said was near the truth. Never even have I asked anybody one word about a machine," May said.

"What! Not been out?" asked William, in surprise.

"No, indeed."

"Well, who has been here—that is, before those fellows with their machines?"

"No one. Oh, I forget—yes, early this morning Jennie came in, and wanted me to go down to the 'Inquiry' agent's. I told her why I could not—that I had promised you—"

"And, of course, that I had promised to get a machine," interrupted William, a little anger manifested in his tone.

"I did not think it was any harm to tell *her*," May said.

"No, nor she to tell Carter, the agent for the 'Inquiry;' and somebody else thought it no harm to give the agent for this other one a chance. But why did you allow them to come in? Why not have sent them off?"

"Oh, Will., I never was rude to anybody in my own house. I don't know how to be. Besides, the first young gentleman was so very polite; and he said that his leaving it was a pleasure—I need not feel at all obliged to purchase it; and if I would only allow him to bring it in just for a few moments, while he explained its merits, then he would remove it immediately, if I wished. But when he pointed out to me its superiority, I thought I had better let it stay until you saw it. He said it was the simplest in construction, more elegant in appearance, and most substantial machinery, of any machine in the market—that they could not begin to supply the demand—"

"All humbuggery. Well, if you believed all this, why did you not send the next fellow off?"

"Oh, Will.! Why, he was such a nice old gentleman, so dignified and pleasant. I could not possibly treat an aged person any way but kindly. And as I had listened to the young one, I felt bound to hear him. Well, he worked on this one, and told me how much lighter and better adapted it was to a lady's use, and that the other was noisy and heavy; how soon I should get tired when using it; that I thought, may be I had better have you see the 'Spokes and Wilboy;' and indeed it does go so gracefully, and scarcely any noise at all."

"Yes. And when I was speaking to Clover about that machine, he told of what a confounded bother the bobbin, or tension, or feed was; and they will all of them tell you the same story of what their machine is, and what others aren't. This I have made up my mind to take is the 'Tinkle and Lamb.' Clover says—I mean Barton says—I don't mind a word those fellows say—that it is an excellent make. He is using one, and his folks like it better than several others they have tried. Now, when these fellows come, get them all off with their machines before I get home, please."

"Oh, I don't know how I shall. Politeness—"

"Very well, just have this room cleared out; for if you listen politely to those confounded bores, you'll have the room full before to-morrow night," snapped William.

"Don't be cross, Will. Indeed I could not help it. But listen. I want to ask you about the machine you like. Has it a double shotted cam? That pleasant young man was telling me about the value of that. I wish you would explain it to me. I could not just understand it," said May, trying to restore William's usual good-humor.

"I've a mind to try the value of a doubled *fist*, and see if it will not *calm* that very agreeable young man. I think some forcible measures should be taken to relieve people from these bores."

"Suppose I consider the young lady you are anxious to be at home to receive, a bore? And perhaps I might resent any ill usage of that young man. Now you had better be discreet," said May, with an arch smile.

William, laughing, followed May to the dining-room. A good dinner soon restored him to amiability.

Jennie Swift came in during the evening, and tried to talk the "Inquiry" into William. But he remained firm in favor of the "Tinkle and Lamb." Between the three May found it impossible to decide.

William again advised her having the room cleared of all furniture, to make room for the others he knew she would be too polite to order off, and was not a bit surprised, when he returned the next afternoon, to find three other machines. May gave her friend Jennie credit for these new additions, saying:

"I know Jennie went, or sent word to the different agencies, just to have a little fun!"

But William declared it was not so. "Nothing but the sharpness and impudence of those canvassers," he said.

"Well, have you decided which of the last three you like the best?" Will. asked.

"No, indeed; I thought *each* perfect until another came."

"Yes, of course; just like the fickleness of woman. I am firm still in my opinion," William said.

"Yes, Will. But if you had heard the gentlemen talk, or rather, if you had heard six good looking young *ladies* talk of the particular merits of the different machines, you might be just as puzzled as I am. I *did* think I would not have 'The Flower,' at any rate. But you see, here it is. The young man really was such a good talker, and for the time made me so sensible of the excellence of his machine, that I almost thought I had found the right one. Then next came 'The Vocal.' That young chap said he would not speak for his machine, it spoke for itself; and he produced a circular, remarking, that I would find that the first people of the country declared in favor of 'The Vocal.' And indeed, Will., it *is* just perfect."

"Well, then, if you had found a perfect one, what did you take another in for?" William asked.

"Dear me, Will., you are just as great a tease as any of the machine men. For the same reason I took you—"

"Took me in? Yes, that's right," interrupted Will., laughing.

"No, you provoking fellow! Married you because I could not say No; and I'm not going to try to. Now I shall just run away from the house for a week, make a visit home, and leave you to send away all the machines but the one you choose to retain."

And, true to her word, May went. Poor William was truly in a pitiable and very embarrassing situation; for the next afternoon, instead of six dreadful bores, came the same number of pleasant and good looking young ladies to give instructions, all meeting at the same time, about four o'clock—after office hours. He listened to each, agreed with all, and so it ended by his hiring a wagon next morning and sending all the machines off, being out of pocket just about three dollars.

When May returned, she was dreadfully disappointed. However, not many days passed before again came a young man, one of the same who had called before, and was perhaps more agreeable than ever—certainly more persevering—and succeeded in making a sale of the Blank machine, I shall call it, because it was not the one of May's husband's choice, or May's either; but the canvasser is a smart young man, and proves that there is nothing like politeness and perseverance.